

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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SPIES ON US: U.S. PRESIDENT AUTHORIZED DOMESTIC SPYING

Rep. Markey Calls for an Investigation Into Secret Domestic Spying

Washington, DC: Representative Edward Markey (D-MA), a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee made the following statements in response to press reports that President Bush secretly authorized the National Security Agency to spy on Americans and others in the United States without evidence that they are involved in terrorism.

“The revelation that this President has chosen to act outside the law by instructing the National Security Agency to eavesdrop on Americans and others inside the U.S. is deeply disturbing. If true, it is a grave matter for the President to thumb his nose at the Constitution, Congress and the courts. While this Republican Congress has proved adept at cutting and running when confronted with actions which cry out for a full investigation by the Congress or the appointment of a special prosecutor, these reports demand an accounting of the criminal violations, if any, which have occurred. America must be a beacon of democratic values and the rule of law, not an example of how to evade constitutional principles through an extra-legal ruse. We cannot attempt to export democratic values to other nations while destroying them here today,” said Rep. Markey.

One month after 9/11 Congress gave the Bush Administration expanded surveillance powers in the Patriot Act. Just yesterday the House of Representatives approved the renewal of the Patriot Act. Press accounts suggest that the domestic surveillance program may have occurred outside of the scope of the Patriot Act and other federal laws relating to government spying.

Rep. Markey continued, “Why are we giving the President extraordinary powers in the Patriot Act if he is going to blatantly violate at will whatever minimal constraints exist to protect the civil liberties of Americans? Is this why the White House agreed to the McCain Amendment against torture –because it doesn’t care what the Constitution, the Congress or the courts say about limits on executive power, and feels free to do whatever it pleases?”

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